



Who May Enter: The contest is open to high school students in Alaska, Arizona, California, Hawaii, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Washington, the United States Territory of Guam and the Commonwealth of the Northern Mariana Islands. Students in the 9th through 12th grades attending public, private, parochial and charter schools, and home-schooled students of equivalent grade status are invited to participate. Children of federal judges, chambers staff, and employees of federal court offices are not eligible to participate.

Subject: “The Right to Vote: Milestone Anniversaries”

In the wake of the 15th and 19th Amendments, barriers remained to prevent United States citizens from voting. **Do formal or informal barriers remain today? What additional changes would you make, if any, to Americans’ voting rights?**

Students should consider some or all of the following significant U.S. Supreme Court cases and state actions when addressing the two questions above. The court cases include Minor v. Happersett (1874), Elk v. Wilkins (1884), Harper v. Virginia Board of Elections (1966), and South Carolina v. Katzenbach (1966). The state actions are Colorado’s Voter Access and Modernized Elections Act of 2013, and Florida’s Voting Rights Restoration for Felons initiative of 2018.

The essay should:

- 1) Demonstrate an understanding of the 15th and 19th Amendments;
- 2) Explain the constitutional powers and rights relevant to the court cases mentioned above; and
- 3) Discuss the role of the judicial branch in preserving our right to vote.

Length and Format: Essays should be between 500 to 1,000 words. While not required, proper use of footnotes and bibliographies will be credited during judging. Footnotes and bibliographies will not be included in the word count. Essays must be submitted electronically on this website – <https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest> – as a Microsoft Word or Adobe Acrobat document. When entering the contest, you will be provided instructions for uploading your document. A student may submit both an essay and a video. A student may submit only one essay and be involved in the production of only one video.

Contest Duration: Entries will be accepted beginning February 15, 2020. The deadline for entries is 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time on March 25, 2020. Finalists will be selected in May and the winners announced in late May.

Judging: Judging will be based on the following criteria:

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| 1) Understanding of constitutional principles | 40 points |
| 2) Clarity and effectiveness in expressing the theme | 30 points |
| 3) Grammar, spelling and composition | 25 points |
| 4) Use of footnotes, bibliographies | 5 points |

Release Forms: Should you become a finalist in the contest, you will be required to submit a release form allowing the Ninth Circuit to publish your essay in print publications and on court public websites. In addition, contest winners will be required to provide and authorize use of photographs of themselves in contest-related promotional materials.

Disqualification: Providing false information, not adhering to the rules, not meeting the submission deadline, or not providing a release form if requested may result in disqualification.

Questions: Contact the Office of the Circuit Executive, (415) 355-8873 / civicscontest@ce9.uscourts.gov.



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The video should:

- 1) Demonstrate an understanding of the 15th and 19th Amendments;
- 2) Explain the constitutional powers and rights relevant to the court cases mentioned above; and
- 3) Discuss the role of the judicial branch in preserving our right to vote.

Length and Format: Individuals or teams of up to three students can produce a 3-5 minute video (not including end credits). Submit as MOV, MPEG4, MPEG2, or WMV files. Resolutions of 720x486 pixels to 1920x1080 pixels are acceptable. Files may not exceed 1GB. Videos should be compressed using the H.264 codec. Submit your video on this website: <https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest>. A student may submit both an essay and a video. A student may submit only one essay and be involved in producing only one video.

Contest Duration: Entries will be accepted beginning February 15, 2020. The deadline for entries is 11:59 p.m. Pacific Time on March 25, 2020. Finalists will be selected in May and the winners announced in late May.

Judging: Judging will be based on objective and subjective criteria:

- | | |
|---|-----------|
| 1) Demonstrates an understanding of the historical background, constitutional powers and rights, and role of the judiciary; | 30 points |
| 2) Exhibits originality and creativity; | 25 points |
| 3) Engages the viewer on emotional/subjective level; | 25 points |
| 4) Displays good production values (audio/video quality, editing, etc.); and | 10 points |
| 5) Respects copyright rules, properly credits content sources. | 10 points |

Release Forms: Should you become a finalist in the contest, you will be required to submit a release form allowing the Ninth Circuit to display your video at public events and on court public websites. Releases also may be required of individuals appearing in your video. Contest winners will be required to provide and authorize use of photographs of themselves in contest-related promotional materials.

Copyright: Adherence to copyright laws and fair use practices will be required. For more information about how to legally make use of imagery, music and other materials, please consult the resources page on this website – <https://www.ca9.uscourts.gov/civicscontest>

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